

A New Aroid from Sarawak

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AN ANOMALOUS AROID was noticed in the collections made three years ago in Sarawak by Mr. J. W. Purseglove, then the Director of the Botanic Gardens, Singapore. It belongs to the group of aroids which shed off the upper portion of the spathes before the fruits are formed on the enclosed spadices. Since the sheaths of the petioles of its leaves are broad and produce long, tongue-shaped free portions, the aroid could be a species of either *Piptospatha* or *Microcasia*. In their general appearance and the way they bend, the spathes resemble those of a *Piptospatha*, and the spadix is fertile up to the apex, a character mentioned for *Piptospatha* only and not for *Microscasia* which is described to have the spadix with a sterile apex or with an apex with sterile flowers. But in Purseglove's specimen the male flowers which occupy the upper two-thirds of the spadix have each two horns through the apical pores of which pollen is shed; and bicornulate stamens form a definitive character of a species of *Microcasia*. Hence the new species is assigned to this genus and named ***Microcasia purseglovei*** in honour of the collector.

Hitherto only two species of this genus were known, *M. elliptica* and *M. pygmaea*, both of which had helped to define the genus as having, among other things, a sterile apex to the spadix; but in view of the characters of the new species, the generic definition has to be altered to include also the species with fully fertile spadices.

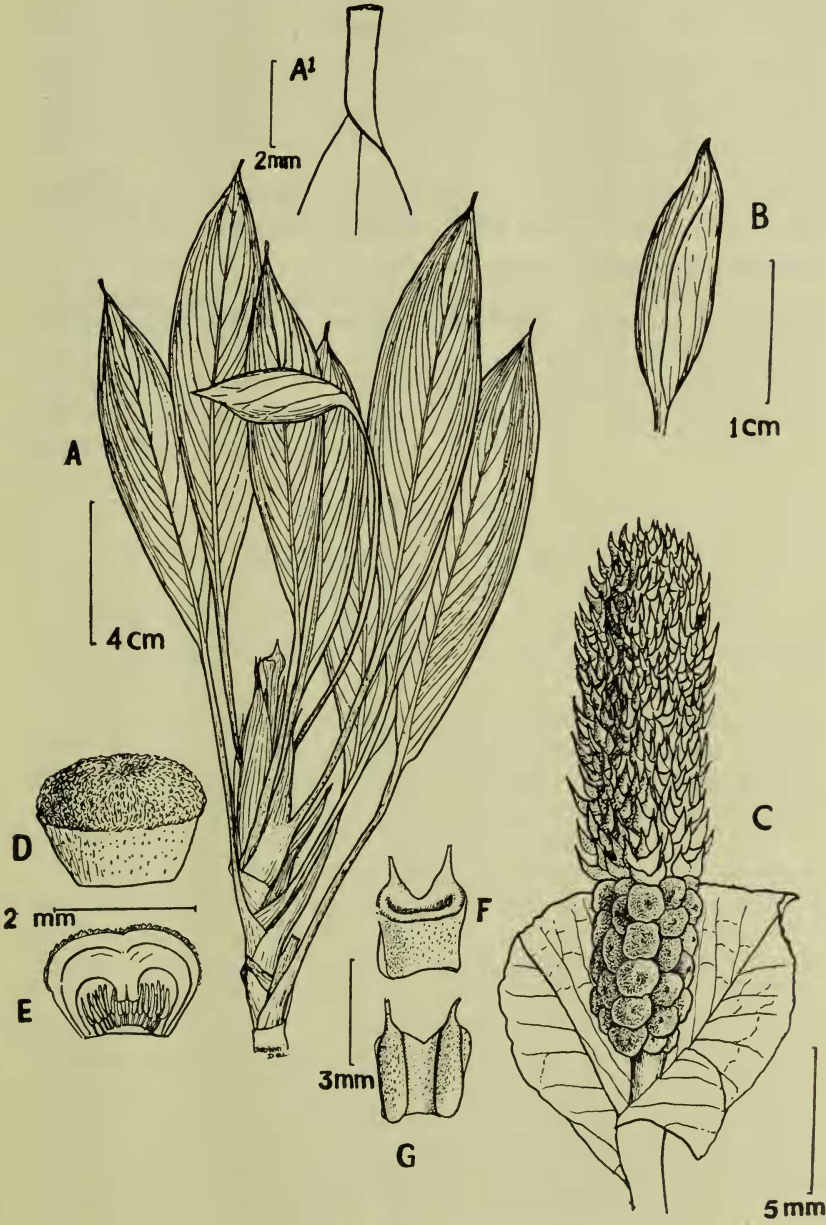
The two earlier described species were very tiny plants; but the new species is a very much larger plant in regard to the vegetative and reproductive parts.

***Microcasia purseglovei* Furtado spec. nov.**

A duabus speciebus usque adhuc cognitis haec species stirpibus omnino majoribus, spadicebus ad apicem usque fertilibus differt.

Caudiculus elongatus, repens, in parte erecta 25–30 cm. altus. *Folia*: petioli tenues, laminis paulo breviores vel eis aequantes, 6–8 cm. longi; vagina papyracea, superne in partem liguliformiter solutam 2.5–3 cm. longam producta; lamina supra saturate viridis,

subtus albo-squamosa, ambitu elliptica, utrinque paulatim curvato-attenuata, apice in pseudo-tubulum abrupte convoluta, margine angustissime revoluta, 8–15 cm. longa, 2.5–3.5 cm. lata, nervis



primariis paucis cum secundariis adscendentibus, dein margine sub-parallelis, utrinque vix prominentibus praedita. *Pedunculus* petiolos superans, 12–18 cm. longus, apice curvatus, spatham horizontalem modo Piptospathae spp. ferens. *Spatha* circa 5 cm. longa, leviter convoluta, cum tubo brevi viridescente persistente quam lamina caduca albescens circa triplo brevior. *Spadix* quam spatha brevior, breviter stipitatus, circa 2.5 cm. longus, omnino fertilis; pars feminea basalis, parte mascula duplo brevior. *Ovarium* 1 mm. altum, circa duplo diametens, stigmate depresso. *Stamina* bicornuta. *Bacca* ignota.

BORNEO: **Sarawak**, Tau, juxta flumen Mayeng dictum (Purse-glove 5344, Holotypus in SING, isoholotypi in K, L, SAR.).

Microcasia purselovei Furtado (Holotypus)

A, Planta. A1, Folii apex. B, Spatha. C, Spadix cum parte spathae. D, Ovarium. E, Ovarium longitudinaliter sectum. F, Stamen antice visum. G, Stamen postice visum.